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ABSTRACT

The case study of an Ohio school superintendent's experiences during the depression illustrates how political, social, and economic events can affect an educational system. Dr. Thomas Warrington Gosling was named superintendent of Akron schools in 1928, following resignation of the previous superintendent as a consequence of turmoil on the Board of Education. During his six years as superintendent, Dr. Gosling initiated numerous projects which aimed toward objectives of high quality education on all levels, a seat for every child, physical education, community harmony, and cooperation with the board on all matters. He worked for passage of substantial bond levys to alleviate overcrowding, stressed child-centered curriculum, and encouraged parental and community participation. However, the financial hard times which hit Akron in 1930 necessitated curtailment of educational programs, firing of staff, salary cutbacks, and a shortened school year. Financial difficulties, combined with his appointment to the presidency of the Junior Red Cross, caused Dr. Gosling to resign as superintendent in 1934. Testimonials upon his retirement indicate that Dr. Gosling's services were much appreciated by teachers, the Board of Education, and the Akron community. The document concludes with Dr. Gosling's 29 recommendations for policy enactment when Akron's financial situation improved. (Author/DB)

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THE URBAN SUPERINTENDENCY AND THE DEPRESSION: THE CASE OF THOMAS WARRINGTON GOSLING, AKRON, OHIO: 1928-34

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Introduction

The decade of the twenties began on a harsh note in Akron. The post World War I recession hit very hard. The rubber industry, Akron's biggest business, especially felt the hard times. Factory employment rolls in the early twenties dropped from 70,000 to a mere 23,000,[1] and Akron's population decreased accordingly. The decrease in city population, however, did not affect the public school enrollment during this period. Most of those who left Akron were single men, simply moving on to find another job. Goodyear (with the help of Wall Street) made a comeback by the mid-twenties, and General Tire and Rubber and Goodrich were able to struggle through. Akron's diverse businesses (pottery, cereal, fishing tackle, soaps, hot air furnaces, electric motors, mattresses, points, tent and awning, metal products, paper boxes, oil drilling machines, and gasoline products) also were able to hold on until the economic upturn of mid-decade.

In 1925, Akron's tire and rubber companies began production of the new ballon tires for automobiles, and the employment rolls steadily increased to about 70,000 once again. These were good times for Akron. Everybody was making money and construction flourished. The city

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built a new North Hill Viaduct[2] and a new sewage plant at Botzum. A new YWCA and a new YMCA were built. By the late 1920's, Polsky's and O'Neil's had constructed two modern department store buildings on South Main Street. The present City Hall building was constructed. The Loew's Theater (later the Civic) was lavishly constructed at a cost of $2,000,000.[3]

By 1929, all the major tire and rubber companies had tripled their 1919 production of tires. The rubber companies, earning money during the boom period, had been investing it back into the company in the form of labor saving devices, machines. Although production had increased three fold, it had been accomplished with fewer employees. The employment rolls of the rubber companies had declined from the previous 70,000 men to approximately 52,000 by 1929. This decrease in jobs at the rubber companies did not seem to affect the overall population of the city. As earlier, while single men left town, there was no noticeable effect on the school population.[4] In fact, public school enrollment increased steadily throughout the twenties. The future for the remainder of the decade looked very rosey.

A stranger visiting Akron for the first time in the summer of 1930 would probably have felt the city to be a very prosperous one indeed. New bridges, new buildings, and new theaters all provided evidence of the supposed

prosperity. If, however, the new visitor was to talk with a banker, he would have quickly learned that the appearance of prosperity was false. Appearances notwithstanding, Akron was in deep financial trouble. But not all bankers agreed that the trouble was very serious. Several felt it to be simply a natural economic readjustment to the excesses of the twenties. The wild stock speculations, the expansion, and the unlimited buying of luxuries were being accounted for in the generally depressed economic condition of the country. The plummeting stock market storm would quickly blow over. President Herbert Hoover was confidently predicting that prosperity was just around the corner. Businessmen were saying, "All that needs to be done is to show the fighting spirit."[5] The consensus was to have salesmen renew their efforts, sell more, and thereby keep the money moving.

The confident predictions neither came true nor stemmed the tide of economic disaster of 1929. In 1930 alone, a total of 14,200 employees in Akron were discharged. This amounted to 21 1/2 percent of the total work force in Akron.[6] Numerous letters were received by the editor of the Akron Beacon Journal with remedies on how to solve the financial crisis. All married women should be discharged from the factories. Employ only married men. Stop hiring foreigners. Stop giving help to jobless people

and force them back to the farms. Eliminate all labor saving devices in the rubber plants. The rash solutions illustrate the panic of Akronites coming to the realization that they were going to have to suffer great hardships now and in the near future. Akron, in an attempt to help relieve the tremendous suffering of its unemployed citizens, spent $184,438 in 1930. In 1931, this figure rose to $378,501.[7]

Akron area banks had to close their doors. Several went out of business altogether, while other banks were able to borrow heavily from the major rubber companies to remain solvent. Grismer relates one story about Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company loaning $3,000,000 to a local bank. Goodyear could not give the local bank a draft because the bank needed cash to do business. The transfer of the money from the Cleveland Trust Bank to Akron required one of the heaviest armed guards ever seen; armored cars, car loads of armed men, and sharp-shooters on all the buildings surrounding the Akron bank insured that the money was delivered safely.[8]

Morale in Akron was at its lowest ebb in 1933 when Franklin D. Roosevelt took office as President. Federal monies began to reach Akron in the form of Civilian Works Administration (CWA) and Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) funds. By 1933, the federal government had spent $3,837,282 in Summit County; by 1934, this

figure had risen to $6,508,510.

By 1925, things were going well in the Akron Public Schools. Enrollment was increasing and the schools were in the national spot light due to their successful implementation of the platoon system. Characteristics of the platoon system adopted in Akron were:

1. The teacher made her room a storehouse of interesting materials for teaching her subject.
2. Children went from room to room which helped work off energy.
3. Teachers could pool their methods for handling discipline cases.
4. Correlation of subjects brought teachers together.
5. Auditoriums were used for teaching citizenship, safety, thrift, music appreciation, and debate.[9]

Schools, however, were not the only factor which brought national attention to Akron in 1925. The Akron Chapter of The Ku Klux Klan, powerful in Akron since 1923, became very influential on a national level in 1925. National Klan membership was at its peak with over 5,000,000 members. The Akron Klan had the world's largest chapter membership at that time.[10] The Klan was able to get a majority of Klan members or supporters elected to the Akron Board of Education between 1923 and 1928. The Klan-dominated board hired George McCord as Superintendent of Schools in 1925.

George McCord had received his Masters Degree from Columbia University and also held a Special Superintendent's Diploma. He had, prior to the Akron job, held the position

of Superintendent of Schools in Springfield, Ohio. He was a known Klan sympathizer, if not a member, and had been fired for his Klan activities in Springfield. After Springfield, Ohio, McCord taught for one year in the Columbus, Ohio, schools before he was hired for the Akron superintendency.

The board also hired Ralph Waterhouse as Assistant Superintendent to work under McCord. Waterhouse had come to Akron in the early 1920's from the Superintendency in Ludlow, Massachusetts, to head Akron's Continuation School. The school was a result of the compulsory education law whereby working boys of fifteen and girls of sixteen had to have at least four hours of schooling per week. Waterhouse's slogan was "Earn More and Learn More."[11] The Akron Continuation School at that time had courses in bricklaying, forging and tool making, sheet metal, auto mechanics, electrical trades, machine and shop practice, printing, bookkeeping, shorthand, typing, cooking and sewing. Waterhouse had also been Akron's Director of Attendance. Waterhouse was not connected with the Klan but, nevertheless, appeared to work well with the new superintendent until the very end of McCord's tenure.

The community was polarized on the question of the Ku Klux Klan and the Akron Beacon Journal ran an editorial expressing its doubt in McCord's ability to succeed in

the face of faction and prejudice.[12] Faced with community polarization, McCord's acts were seldom viewed objectively and there was much turbulence during the years that he was in office.

The November elections in 1927 saw an anti-Klan majority elected to the Board of Education. One of the new board's first steps, after its members took office in January of 1928, was to informally notify George McCord that he would not be rehired as Superintendent when his contract ran out at the end of June. This was made official at the March 19, 1928, meeting of the board.[13]

McCord's last official report was made to the Akron Board on May 7, 1928. This report was an example of McCord's style and provided an exciting board meeting.

Just before adjournment of the regular meeting, the superintendent recommended that the board not renew Waterhouse's contract when it expired that June. This recommendation came as a total suprise to the board in its public meeting and they demanded to know why. McCord said that he had a letter from a woman teacher making certain accusations against Waterhouse that necessitated his removal from the system, but he would not show the letter. Enraged, the board immediately went into executive session but invited the press if they would promise to use discretion in their reporting.

Once in executive session, the board demanded to be shown the letter. McCord refused. There was considerable shouting and pounding upon the table, but McCord continued to refuse to show the letter. Finally, the board said that if McCord would not show them the letter, he should never mention it again. However, McCord's one friend on the board, Mr. Hyde, persuaded him to produce the letter.

In essence, the letter related that, after school meetings, a group of Central High School teachers habitually visited a local restaurant. On one particular occasion, a male teacher had made advances toward the female teacher who had written the letter. The woman wanted some kind of official action taken against the male teacher. That was the gist of the entire letter, but the woman mentioned in one sentence that Waterhouse had offered her a cigarette that night at the restaurant.

The board was incensed that McCord had made such a recommendation based on such flimsy evidence. McCord, however, continued his argument by stating that Waterhouse lacked the kinds of educational credentials demanded by a job such as his, that of assistant superintendent. Waterhouse was asked if he wanted to reply or make a statement, but he refused, saying that the attack was so full of personal feelings that it would do no good to make any replies.

Mr. Hyde, McCord's friend, could take it no longer. He jumped to his feet and leaning across the table toward McCord, began yelling,

> I can see nothing but vindictiveness in this. Nothing you could have done would have aroused the animosity of the Board against you like this. You are at the end of your term, about to step out, and you bring a charge like this. You said nothing to me about this, and I should have known it as Chairman of the Teacher Committee. I saw you within the last forty-eight hours and you could have told me. You have made another mistake and I would have told you you made a mistake, just as I have pointed out other mistakes you have made.[14]

With that, there was a motion and a loudly acclaimed voice vote which trampled McCord's recommendation six to zero. Waterhouse was immediately appointed to the position of acting superintendent.

McCord stalked out of the session and never appeared before the board again. All of his remaining communications with the board were through the mail, and the board suspended his last month in office by granting him a leave of absence.

McCord was within a few months of retirement at the time he was terminated by the Akron system. He tried desperately to secure any type of position with any system in the state so that he could receive full retirement benefits. The retirement board extended his deadline three times, but McCord was never able to get a position with any Ohio school district, as someone from

Akron always wrote an incriminating letter which destroyed his chances.

Such were the politics and economic background as the Akron Board of Education began its search for a new superintendent.

The Early Years, 1928-29

The Akron Board of Education consisted of seven members at the time of George McCord's firing in 1928. Robert Guinther, an attorney, was the Board President. George Sherman, President of Akron Industrial Salvage Company, was the Board Vice-President. The remaining members were: Walter F. Kirn, a businessman; L. Roy Reifsnider, a realtor; Willis W. Thornton, a retired newspaper executive; Milton E. Murphy, an architect; and McCord's personal friend, Mr. Grant Hyde, a businessman and member of the University of Akron Board of Trustees.[15] These men, having informally in January notified McCord that he would not be rehired, began the search for a new superintendent.

At a convention in Boston, several men were screened and interviewed by those board members in attendance. This was a very informal procedure as the board was simply putting out "feelers" to ascertain interest in the Akron job. Applications poured into Akron and in a short time, there were over fifty people interested in the job. Interestingly, an alternative to the superintendency had also been considered. In previous years, a plan had been proposed which would completely drop the position of superintendent and combine the top public school post with

the top local university post. With this plan, the President of the Municipal University of Akron would also be the Superintendent of Schools, but his title would be Director of Education. This plan loomed as a real possibility due to the Board's "bad" experience with George McCord.

Board President Robert Guinther and board member Roy Reifsnider went on an extended trip to interview the candidates who had made application to the Akron Board for the superintendency. Upon their return and after consultation with the Board, they narrowed the list of candidates to five men. They were:

J. W. Studibaker, Superintendent, Des Moines, Iowa.

R. W. Bardwell, Superintendent, Rock Island, Illinois.

T. W. Gosling, Superintendent, Madison, Wisconsin.

W. W. Borden, Superintendent, South Bend, Indiana.

P. C. Stetson, Superintendent, Dayton, Ohio.[16]

Ralph Waterhouse, W. J. Banks, Dean of the Teachers College at the Municipal University of Akron, and George F. Zook, President of the Municipal University of Akron, were also considered in conjunction with the plan for Zook's job and the Akron Superintendency being combined into one post. The board decided that they would not hire anyone connected in any way with the previous administration for the superintendency.[17]

Dr. Gosling stopped in Akron on his way to Washington, D. C. for a half-day visit. Though he was introduced to the board and visited several schools, his visit "resulted in nothing tangible."[18]

On April 4, 1928, the front page headlines in the Akron Beacon Journal read, "NEW AKRON SCHOOL HEAD NAMED." Grant Hyde and George Sherman had been sent to Madison, Wisconsin, to offer the superintendency to T. W. Gosling. The contract was for five years at $10,000 per year. The Board had been unanimous in their choice and Dr. Gosling accepted the office. The very next day, an Akron editorial urged the citizens of Akron to forget the strife of the McCord era and support and work with the new Superintendent.[19]

Gosling was a native of Ohio; born in Cincinnati, he received his elementary and high school education there. Gosling received his A.B. and M.A. from Yale University and returned to Cincinnati to take his Ph.D. at the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Gosling taught English in Cincinnati at Hughes High and later served as President of the National Council of Teachers of English. He was also an elementary and secondary principal in Cincinnati before going to the Wisconsin State Department of Education where he held the position of State High School Inspector for three years. From the State Department Gosling moved to the Superintendency of Madison, Wisconsin.

In Madison, Gosling's problem was to draft a school development program that would enable the city to keep pace in terms of educational facilities with its growing population.[20] He directed the construction of several schools in Madison including East Side High, Emerson Elementary, Randall Elementary, and Lowell Elementary in his seven years as superintendent. In addition, he established the first city school district Department of Child Guidance and Special Education in the country. Curricula were developed for the crippled, mentally handicapped, and those with speech defects. Probably his most innovative program was the Madison Plan. Dr. Gosling placed outstanding school principals in the position to largely administer affairs in their own buildings with a remarkable degree of freedom and independence. This plan was based on his belief that persons of ability developed their qualities when given responsibilities.[21] Dr. Gosling also fostered the Parent Teachers Association to promote community understanding. He gave his teaching staff a part in policy making and kept the public well informed through the press and his civic activities. He was director of the Madison YMCA and the Civic Music Association. Gosling was a member of the Board of Industrial Education and the Library Board. He was on the Executive Committee of Neighborhood Housing and on the Council of Public Welfare. Prior to World War I, Gosling had studied

special school methods in Germany and England. It was in Europe that he learned about the Junior High Plan which he favored though not necessarily in separate buildings.[22] Gosling held the rank of Captain in the First Ohio Infantry in World War I. He was very active in the Red Cross and was married, with two children. His son, Arthur W. was to graduate from college that June 23. His daughter Jane Francis was a sophomore at Central High in Madison.

These credentials impressed the Akron Board and they wanted him to start on July 1, 1928. Although agreeable, Gosling wanted to be at his son's graduation from the University of Wisconsin on June 18, 1928 and he had a previous obligation to teach a five-week summer course at the University of Chicago. The Akron Board was understanding and consented to Gosling's request to only come to Akron on the weekends until his summer obligation had been fulfilled. Waterhouse and Erwine (a second assistant superintendent) had been running the system since McCord had departed and would continue to do so until Gosling arrived on a full-time basis. As it happened, Gosling was able to arrive a week earlier than expected. He was greeted with a newly remodeled office and two large bouquets of flowers from his staff and the Board.

At the outset, it appeared that Dr. Gosling had several things in his favor that would help him succeed as superintendent. He had a wealth of experience, the

Akron press was favorable and it was actively seeking public approval of Gosling. The Board was unanimously behind him and the past political situation had left Akron anticipating brighter days for its schools. The economic situation was flourishing and money was available. With these supporting factors as allies, Gosling came to Akron in July of 1928 to work with 1,200 teachers and 41,000 students toward better education.

Gosling was a tall, spare figure of a man who carried himself very erect. He had dark hair, lively eyes, a straight nose, and wore glasses which gave him a scholarly air. His lips were thin and generally smiling. His chin was square and he had a quick, easy speech. This was the man that first addressed the Akron Board of Education in its regular public meeting on July 2, 1928.

> Above everything else, I want to give the people and children of Akron the best possible schools. That cannot be done in a day or a week. It will take time. Schools should not be subjected to rapid changes, but to a process of evolution that brings out the best available in educational methods. . . . But one person cannot do it all. . . . The first thing I want to see in the schools is a seat for every child. That is the most important thing in the schools now. I am in favor of the junior high plan but not necessarily in separate buildings. I am emphatically in favor of physical education. I do not omit the value of kindergarten.[24]

Dr. Gosling also stated that he would be guided by the Board's decision no matter what his personal views. The watchwords of his leadership were to be harmony and cooperation.

Gosling, in effect, had presented to the Board what he believed to be the most pressing needs of the system. He would be working toward harmony, cooperation, and a seat for every child. His first step in the direction of the goals came after his opening speech. He recommended that the Board adopt his tentative plan for reorganization of the administrative staff. The present members would be retained but their duties would be assigned on a schedule which was more scientific and would promote smoother operation of the schools.[25] His plan of reorganization was unanimously approved by the Board and the responsibilities of the system's assistant superintendents were:

Superintendent
First Assistant
- 1. Secondary Education
  - a. grades 7 - 12
  - b. Vocational Education
  - c. Continuation School
  - d. Opportunity School
- 2. Business (equip. & supplies)
- 3. Adult Education
  - a. Evening School
  - b. Americanization

Second Assistant
- 1. Guidance
- 2. Records
  - a. statistics
  - b. pupil personnel
- 3. Reference
  - a. curriculum
  - b. tests & measurements
  - c. remedial programs
  - d. publications

Director of Ele. Ed.
- 1. Elementary Education, k - 6
- 2. Health
- 3. Special Classes
  - a. nutrition
  - b. crippled
  - c. deaf
  - d. vision
  - e. hospital[26]

Gosling received the support of the Akron Beacon Journal the next day[27] in an editorial that commented that Gosling should receive support for every intelligent plan he presented which would advance the welfare of the schools.

The remainder of the summer of 1928 was spent in getting to know the system and making preparations for the 1928 - 1929 school year. Alterations in the gymnasium wing were made at Crouse Elementary and at McEbright Elementary Schools, movable and adjustable desks were bought for the children at Hill Elementary, and space was rented in the privately owned Goodyear Hall for classrooms. The cost for five rooms was $266 per month plus $50 per month for use of the elevator. Also during that summer, the proposed 1929 budget was recommended to the Board. It was $4,463,856 as compared to the 1928 budget of $4,136,000. Teachers were hired, clerks were hired, texts were purchased, and other school alterations were recommended. All in all, Dr. Gosling had spent his first few months in Akron applying himself to organizing for the coming school year and perfecting the harmony and teamwork in all branches of the school operation that would be necessary to provide the types of atmosphere needed by the children of Akron for their education.

As school opened in September, Gosling succeeded in getting the Board to authorize a $2,800,000 bond levy to be put on the November ballot for the acquisition of school sites, erecting, enlarging, repairing, and furnishing of buildings. Gosling then proceeded to work toward the successful passing of the levy. He first outlined the need for new facilities to the community on September 11, 1928.[28] There had been an increase of 2,645 pupils in 1928 over the 1927 enrollment figures. This was partly accounted for by the annexation of sections adjoining the city and the expansion of kindergartens. Nevertheless, the need for more room and more teachers was obvious. Gosling had visited every school in the city and had noted the crowded conditions. He was especially critical of classrooms in the basements of buildings and as a stop-gap measure recommended the purchase of portables and renting more rooms at the private Goodyear Hall.

Gosling used science as a lever to promote community approval of his recommendation.

> The solution of modern school problems is based on facts, as against the old method of debate and personal opinion. Fact finding in education is divided into three phases: as related to the affairs of administration, methods of teaching, and the individual needs of individual children. I aim to build in Akron an educational system that will be adaptable to the particular needs of individual children.[29]

Another example of Dr. Gosling's work toward the successful passage of the bond issue was in his effort to

get the support of community organizations. On October 2, 1928, he addressed the Home and School League. His topic was "Sending The Whole Child To School."[30] He commented on the prevailing tendency of the school to draw away from the home and stressed the desirability of the two institutions working together. The schools were improving and deserved the financial support of the citizens of Akron. As a result, the Home and School League endorsed the bond issue and helped in the campaign to insure its passage at the polls in November, 1928.

On the day before the election, Gosling gave a short news release:

> When you go to the polls Tuesday to vote for candidates of public offices, it is important that you remember the school bond issue proposed by the Board of Education. Akron Schools are overcrowded now and unless the bond issue carries, several thousand school children will be without proper school accomodations. The bond issue proposal deserves your hearty support.[31]

By a vote of 47,511 to 16,485, the $2,800,000 bond issue was passed, but Gosling did not withdraw into the recesses of his Central High School office with the money safely voted into the school's fund. He continued to meet and speak with the public. He made a plea for public cooperation with the schools in providing outside programs that would complement the work being done within the schools. At the end of November, he spoke before the Eskimo Dinner Club and stated that the schools were teaching children to have a clean mind, but outside of

school, the children were able to attend motion pictures that presented lawlessness, gang warfare, and banditry. Again, he was asking for the community to do its share in educating the children of Akron.

By December of that year, Gosling had succeeded in starting a kindergarten program in the Akron Public Schools. Akron was one of the first systems in the country to establish a public kindergarten and it was up to the public of Akron to keep pace with growth and provide adequate kindergarten for all its children. Gosling said,

> I believe in kindergarten and people who think children are only taught to play in kindergarten do not know the function of kindergarten. Some of the greatest lessons in the world are taught through play.[32]

As the year 1928 drew to a close, Gosling recommended that the Board of Education endorse what he believed to be the immediate needs of the Akron Public Schools. In light of the successful bond issue, he recommended that the Board purchase seven new school sites, purchase more land adjacent to two existing sites, build three new schools within the next year (64 rooms), purchase eleven new portables, and rent eight more rooms in Goodyear Hall.[33] The recommendation was approved.

The first six months of Gosling's tenure were busy, indeed. He had made strides to accomplish his goals of harmony, cooperation, and a seat for every child. In addition, he had moved to deal with his personal biases of

physical education, kindergarten, and the junior high. In the case of the junior high, Gosling had to suspend action due to Akron's financial plight and overcrowdedness, but it was still one of his top priorities.

The first action of the board in 1929 was to begin searching for property for the new schools. Of $201,500 left from a 1924 bond issue, Gosling recommended that $177,500 be used for purchasing sites, $18,000 for purchasing portables, and $6,000 for new equipment before the new bonds were released.

As the search for sites began, Gosling again was out in the community "selling" the schools. In a speech before the Knights of Columbus, Gosling commented on the fact that education had developed from a haphazard presentation to a scientific measurement of the students ability, "Capabilities are measured and the students are classified accordingly, their studies being presented according to ability."[34] In other words, Akron's schools were working for everyone.

January and February of 1929 proved to be busy months with regard to the strides being made toward "a seat for every child." The board started negotiations for a site on Wilbeth Road, west of Arlington Street for a school. A site in the Thomastown area was purchased, although no school was to be built until the situation demanded it. Another site at the corner of La Follette

and Coventry Streets consisting of fifty-two separate parcels for $80,000 was under consideration. Approximately twenty-nine houses would have to be moved if this site was purchased. Three other sites were also under consideration: on Glenmount Avenue, on Garry Road, and on Copley Road in the Maple Valley area.

The board approved three schools to be built in 1929. One on the Maple Valley site, one on the Garry Road site, and one on the La Follette Street site. The board also approved Gosling's recommended annexation of the Kenmore school system which added about 8,000 students to the Akron system. Mr. Willis Thornton, board member in ill health, retired and the board elected A. R. Ritzman, previously of the Kenmore Board, to replace him. Also, the Board approved Dr. Gosling's $4,638,768 appropriations budget.

In March, April and May, three separate series of bonds were issued on the $2,800,000 voted in the 1928 election. The Maple Valley school, named Schumacher after the Schumacher Mills founder, was to cost approximately $246,000. The Gary Road school was to be named Barber, after the match-maker king from Barberton, Ohio. The La Follette Street school was named Goodrich after the Goodrich Tire and Rubber Company. The three issues were to cover these three schools.

By the end of the 1928 - 29 school year, Gosling had directed the purchase of seven school sites and construction

was approved and under way for three facilities. Pressures were mounting from the West Akron citizens and the North Akron residents, however, for two new high schools in their respective areas. Gosling was against any new high school construction until every elementary child had a seat, but indicated that possibly by 1932, there would be new high schools built. He was also postponing the junior high recommendations until such time that elementary over-crowdedness was relieved or solved.

Gosling did not forget his community relations during the last half of the 1928-29 school year although he was heavily involved in the building program. The National Education Association's (NEA) Superintendent's Convention was held in Cleveland, Ohio, on the subject of teacher training. This was in February. Gosling made two speeches to this convention. It was his feeling that the entire project of teaching, including preservice and inservice training, called for a united and shared endeavor on the part of teacher training institutions and the field staffs of the public schools. As Gosling saw it, the universities did not know about the schools and the schools had not availed themselves to the training process of teachers. What was needed for the improvement of American education was a closer articulation of training institutions and of the public schools in the field. In his second speech, Gosling stated that the superintendent

must be thoroughly indoctrinated with the theory of democracy. He must believe in the schools and the children. His training should include liberal arts, education, teacher training, classroom experience, integrity in character, and devotion to public schools.[35]

In two later Akron speeches, one before the Parent Teacher Association and one at the First Methodist Church Father-Son Banquet, Gosling stressed the desirable relationship between parents and children. He felt it should be cooperative in nature, but that it must begin early in the child's life. When the child first comes to school, he should be already well developed, both mentally and physically. Once in school, a cooperative relation between the home and the school should concentrate on the child's development and progress, rather than placing an inordinate emphasis on grades.

The overcrowding problem continued and, during the summer of 1929, Gosling recommended three more schools be constructed. Bowing to the pleas and demands of the West and North Akron residents, he recommended a new high school to be built on the West side of Akron to accommodate approximately 1,050 students. This was to be the George Washington High School (later called John R. Buchtel High School). On the North side of Akron, another high school was to be built to house approximately the same number of students. This school was later named North High School.

The third school, an elementary, was to be built on the Glenmount site in South Akron. The total cost would be approximately $1,140,000, which, along with the previous expenditures, would leave a balance of $440,000 from the $2,800,000 bond levy.[36] The architect was to begin immediately with plans for the new schools.

The proposed 1930 budget was also presented to the board in the summer of 1929. It was $774,379 higher than the previous year's budget and totaled $4,526,335. Of this, $2,838,440 was designated for teacher salaries. The increases were rationalized by the fact that pupil enrollment had jumped to 53,800 in one year. Later in the month, however, the budget commission told Gosling he would have to cut his budget, due to increasing financial difficulties across the nation. Gosling was forced to cut in the area of teachers, because the most dramatic effects could be realized on the total budget by reducing salary costs. He only hired about half as many teachers as he had originally planned and felt were needed to keep class sizes down.

With the begining of the school year in September, 1929, there was still a need for more space. There were thirty-two portables and fourteen rented rooms in Goodyear Hall at this time and Gosling, noting that the two new high schools would use most of the remaining bonds from the past levy, recommended that the board prepare to put

another bond issue on the ballot in November of 1930.

The Ohio Congress of Parents and Teachers met in Springfield, Ohio, in October. Gosling spoke on the pressing need of psychology in the home, saying that psychology for parents is the most urgent need today in the application of the findings which the science had brought to the world. He indicated that parents often devote considerable time to the physical welfare of the child, but leave the rest of his development to the church and school. Parents must consider the total environment when raising children. Later that month, at a Northeast Ohio Teachers Association meeting, Gosling had the opportunity to speak on the "Social Aspects of Sight Conservation." Finally, to round out the month of October, Gosling was appointed to serve on a panel for a National Survey of Secondary Education by William Cooper, U.S. Commissioner of Education. Gosling was bringing honors to himself and Akron.

Back in Akron, in December, Gosling dedicated Schumacher Elementary School as one which expressed the child-centered idea. The building contained the finest library, home economic rooms, gymnasium, auditorium, and classrooms possible. He also used this opportunity to begin campaigning for next year's levy. Akron still had 3,000 elementary students above the kindergarten level attending school on a half-time basis. In addition,

citizens in the Glenmount area were asking for their new school to relieve the overcrowding their children were experiencing. The problem was city-wide, however, and the system desperately needed the new bond levy to adequately house the soaring enrollment.

Two final honors were bestowed upon Gosling and Akron before the end of December, 1929. First, Gosling was named to the Educational Council of the Ohio Education Association. He promptly urged teachers to make the most of their talents in creative work, both in their relations with pupils and between themselves in a speech entitled "Creative Activity In The Classroom." Secondly, Secretary of the Interior Wilbur named Gosling, one of four Ohio educators, to a national committee for the Reorganization of Secondary Education.

Hard Times, 1930-33

1929, for the schools in Akron, had ended on a positive note, but the financial situation of the nation had received a serious blow. Several economic sectors were "biting the financial bullet," and several others had already succumbed to the growing graveyard of dead businesses.

Gosling, too, was begining to sense an impending financial crisis, but there were more immediate interests in the system that required his attention. A new Board of Education was in office. Guinther, Reifsnider, Hyde, and Kirn had all left the board and, as a result of the previous November's election, Clarence Foust, Mrs. Otis Hower, Mrs. Nellie Scott, and Edward Conner joined the board. Their first item of business, of course, was the building program for 1930. Retiring Board President Guinther said that the new board would have to seek authorization from the citizens for another bond issue to meet the building needs of the system. Gosling reported that in December, 1929, the school enrollment was 53,751 as compared to 45,068 in December, 1928. The Kenmore and Springfield school systems had been annexed which accounted for a large portion of the increased enrollment. These

figures were used as a plea for increased financial support from the citizens.

At the January 13 meeting of the Board, Gosling recommended the adoption of a $5,306,862 appropriations budget. This amount was over half a million dollars more than the prior year's budget, but the size of the system had increased substantially. The largest part of the budget was the teacher salary fund. Second in size was the debt service incurred with the issuance of bonds voted earlier by the citizens. The remainder of the bonds were to be used for the two new high schools (named Buchtel and North at this meeting) and for two additions: one at Firestone Elementary School and one at Margaret Park Elementary School. Gosling warned the board, however, that the time was coming when they would not have enough money to run the schools. But, he, along with the staff, would find out how to cope with the situation and would keep the board informed.

One month later, Gosling changed plans and recommended that instead of an addition at Firestone Elementary School, the board should construct a new school on the Glenmount site named Voris, if the city would extend the sewer and water lines 350 feet to the site. He planned to model the school after the recently constructed Schumacher and Barber schools. The board approved. Also, in February, Ellet and Windermere school systems were annexed by the board,

which added approximately 1,000 students to the Akron system. The school system was busily growing and Gosling reported that he viewed this as a hopeful sign despite the present business conditions and unemployment.

By the time April came, conditions had worsened economically and Gosling sent Waterhouse and three high school principals to Detroit to study the double sessions plan that had been implemented there. Nevertheless, in May, he recommended the rehiring of the entire 1,508 member teaching staff for the 1930 - 1931 school year.

Mr. Konarski, the school architect, presented the plans for the two new high schools to Gosling and the board. The Buchtel facility was Italian Renaissance architecture, while the North facility was Modernistic. Gosling then proceeded with the letting of contracts on both school plants. In addition, Gosling recommended that the board purchase land for a new Kenmore High School to be built within the next two or three years. This recommendation touched off a battle with the Kenmore realtors. Those with properties in the affected area took the matter to Akron City Hall, but the Akron City Council sided with the schools and the site was purchased.

The board, with Mrs. Otis, however, pushing the issue, called for more vocational education and, although Gosling was in favor of it, he recommended that they wait because economic conditions were worsening. The system was going

to experience difficulties due to three factors:

1. annexing other schools
2. delinquent taxes
3. tax duplicate uncertainty.[37]

Gosling notified the board that they had better enter a period of retrenchment and curtailment, rather than proceed with an extension of new activities. He reminded them, also, that the increased teacher salaries fund was due, not to increased salaries, but to the need for more teachers brought about by annexation. The only way to expand was to get another bond issue and operating levy passed, but Gosling did not recommend this move yet. Instead, he recommended that the board drop plans to put the proposed bond issue on the November ballot. The board disagreed and was immediately attacked by the Beacon Journal for not considering the wisdom of Gosling's recommendation.[38]

Enrollment increased to 57,625 by the end of the 1929-30 school year and, in the proposed budget, this was seen as an increase in needed monies. Gosling recommended $5,655,385. The budget carried a $40,455 deficit, but Gosling felt that the difference could be made up by a combination of savings during the remainder of 1930 and appropriations from the 1931 contingency fund. The increase was a result of enlarged staff, new schools, and the enormous bond debt. He again recommended that a new bond issue not be put on the ballot in November, 1930,

because the board would desperately need renewal of an operating levy in November, 1931, which would become effective in 1932. This time, the board accepted Gosling's recommendation.

Gosling proposed how he planned to cut $43,000 from the budget on July 28, 1930. First, he would increse the teacher-pupil ratios. Secondly, he would not open the new Buchtel High until the 1931-32 school year. Lastly, he asked for authorization from the board to make whatever other economic savings he saw fit.

The general economic condition in Akron was becoming very tight and, as a public relations move, an agreement was made with the contracting firms working on the several new schools. Each firm promised to rotate their men so at least 75 percent would be affected and, thus, spread the money over a larger number of people. Portage Township Schools were under consideration to be annexed by the Akron Public Schools but, due to their low taxation, Gosling recommended that Akron not take them now, but reconsider them after the new year began.

In September when school commenced, Gosling cut sixty-nine elementary teachers in his staff reorganization. This move put the pupil-teacher ratio at 38.06, but several classes were over forty because of the small size of the special classes operated by the system. Gosling increased the high school staff by twenty teachers

expecting increased high school enrollment. This put the high school pupil-teacher ratio at 30.8. He received a gread deal of static for this reorganization but, as the enrollment figures came in for the first month of school, the high school figures had increased 1,198, while the elementary figures had decreased by 827. He was vindicated and had saved $73,500. In addition, some supervisory positions were dropped and this boosted the savings to $77,100. These savings made it possible to complete the year without salary cuts and even expand the Hower Vocational School offerings slightly.

Gosling had succeeded in putting all students, grades one through twelve, on a full-time schedule by October. This was a result of increasing the pupil-teacher ratios and of having added the new facilities. He publicly thanked the teachers in the local press.[39]

Financially, 1930 ended in the black for the Akron schools, but Gosling was quick to warn that 1931 would be more difficulty.

Gosling did not neglect his speech making in 1930. In a speech before the Lions Club in January, he impressed upon the audience that the schools belonged to the whole city, not just the school board. In February, he told about the relationship between the schools and business to the Civitan Club. If education can raise its standards, business will reap the benefits. In Atlantic City, at

the 1930 NEA Convention, Gosling spoke of the need to discard old equipment and buildings as did business and industry so education could move forward. In a speech before the Altruse Club, he commented on the future benefits of educational guidance. At the Illinois Congress of Parents and Teachers in Evanston, he spoke on the cooperation between the home and the school with regard to leisure time activities. At the Akron Real Estate Board meeting, Gosling recommended that the schools go to a "pay as you go" plan for future construction, but noted the difference between a bond issue and an operating levy. He made a final 1930 plea for renewal of the operating levy in November, 1931, at this meeting also.[40]

The first cuts in the Akron Public Schools and, indeed, the first mention (publicly) of hard times ahead, came in 1930. Gosling, realizing the financial crisis was to worsen, nevertheless continued to present the schools to the public in a manner which continually emphasized their relationship to the rest of the community. In other words, as went the community, so went the schools.

The Fairlawn schools and Mt. Hope, of the Portage Schools, were annexed early in 1931, but Gosling recommended that the board not take Tallmadge yet because it was too late to receive the tax money from the Tallmadge district. Without that tax money, Akron would have to pay approximateley $30,000 to operate these new schools.

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due to lack of funds. It was a condition that was due to the overall economic situation and nothing could be done about it. Citizens immediately began writing letters to the Beacon Journal with criticisms about the suggested cuts.

On a lighter note, Gosling dedicated the new Voris Elementary School which helped to reduce the serious overcrowding at Firestone Elementary. Ten days later, however, Gosling stated that everyone in the system might face a two week loss of pay as the schools tried to make up a $500,000 shortage that was expected in the next tax collection. Again, everyone was upset with this prospect, but the board gave Gosling the authority to do it, plus make reductions in the fall of 1931, if need be. In addition, Gosling was authorized to make whatever contract revisions in 1932 that may be warranted by the economic situation. The Akron Teachers Association consented to the cuts, but Gosling assured them that dismissal of teachers would be a last resort.[41]

Three serious conditions faced the board in May, 1931. First of all was the depression itself. As a result of the depression, secondly, there was great uncertainty about the tax laws and thirdly, was the issue of changing real estate appraisals. All of these factors made it impossible for the board to know how much money to expect from its milage. The prospect was for decreasing returns

on the voted milage, so Gosling appealed to the state legislature to pass legislation enabling the schools to vote additional taxes outside the fifteen mill limit. His appeal was based on the domocratic ideal that the majority, not a set number over the majority, should be able to decide how much support their schools were to receive. The legislature did not act on Gosling's appeal and Gosling then reported to the public that, without additional legislative help, the schools would receive only fifty percent of the funds needed for operation in the 1931 - 32 school year.[32]

The proposed 1932 budget was sent to the board in June of 1931. Gosling noted that he only asked for necessities. It was $224,369 less than the 1931 budget. Gosling indicated that the board could expect a dark year ahead because the legislature had not made adqequate provisions for financing the public schools. Nevertheless, Gosling expressed the hope that the people of the city would recognize the fact that under the pressures imposed by the prevailing conditions, the schools were still endeavoring to give all the children the best possible educational opportunities that could then be provided.

In a meeting with the taxing officials of the city in August, Gosling told the county auditor that the board could not reduce the budget another cent without seriously crippling school operations. In return, the auditor

warned Gosling that the psychological effects of a November renewal levy would probably result in its defeat. Gosling, feeling that the schools belonged to the people, refused to remove the levy from the ballot.

Meanwhile, on the construction front, the schools were receiving criticism from the State examiners, because the board had apparently been paying contractors for extras that were not stated in the Board Minutes. Verbal agreements had to be made official before payment could occur. Noting their laxity, the board made amends and construction continued.

At the opening-of-school assembly for teachers, Gosling said,

> It may be necessary to close kindergarten, the Continuation School, Trade School, art, music, physical education, home economics, and industrial arts. It may also be necessary to ask teachers to teach for half pay.[43]

The same three problems continued to affect the schools. The financial and industrial depression, the radical changes in state tax laws, and the reappraisal of real estate values upon which the tax rates were based made 1931 a serious year and 1932 appeared as if it was going to be even more serious. The 1932 revenues would be even lower than the 1931 revenues. For these reasons, it was essential that renewal of the operating levy be passed in November. Failure would mean that the schools could only remain open for five months, rather than the usual ten.

Gosling spoke on the need for the renewal of the five mill levy before the Chamber of Commerce on September 23, 1931. He essentially left the matter up to the people of Akron. If the levy failed, school income would be cut by fifty percent and the school would necessarily only be open half as long as usual.

Gosling and the board began planning for an intensive levy campaign. They tried to impress upon the public the difference between a bond levy and the renewal of an operating levy which provided half of Akron's operating money. To document the need, the schools prepared pamphlets indicating that a warning had been received from the North Central Association concerned that the pupil-teacher ratio was over 30:1, that thirty-five teachers had been released in the 1930-31 school year, and that Akron had the lowest per pupil cost of any city in Ohio over a 100,000 population. Akron's per pupil cost was $79.18 per child and the average for the eight largest cities was $109.34.

In October, Gosling notified all principals that the schools might be closed for the entire month of December. If so, it would be a payless holiday. If the board decided to take that step, it could take care of most of the budget deficit and enable the schools to open in January, 1932, in the black. This early notification would enable the teachers to plan their personal budgets accordingly.

Gosling spoke before the American Legion in another

attempt to push the renewal levy. He felt that the children of Akron ought not to be made to pay for the depression by going without school. In the worst of times, there were certain fundamental institutions that had to be maintained, unless the "pillars of our temple of American civilization" were to be torn down. He continued to stress that this was not an added tax, but a renewal.

By a margin of only 3,127 votes, the renewal of the five mill operating levy passed, even in the middle of the depression. Gosling and the board had worked hard and, hopefully, had saved the schools from having to operate on half the anticipated income.

The financial squeeze was still serious and, by December, in a report to the board, Gosling recommended his own salary be cut to $5,000 per year. He had already taken a previous cut to $5,800. In addition, he recommended that East High School go to split sessions. Their enrollment was 1,882, while their capacity was only 1,234. Due to the depression, no new buildings could be built to relieve the situation. Juniors and seniors would attend the morning session from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and freshmen and sophomores would attend the afternoon session from 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Teachers would only teach one session per day.

The taxes usually collected in December, 1931, had

been postponed until February, 1932. This being the case, the board only had enough money to meet its teacher payroll until Junuary 15, 1932. The board had three choices: (1) borrow on anticipated receipts, (2) not pay teacher, or (3) close. Gosling recommended that the schools be closed until January 18, 1932. Even so, the board would start the new year with a $482,000 deficit and a need to borrow $350,000 as soon as they opened. As a gapstop measure, the county auditor agreed to accept early tax payments. As the schools closed for Christmas vacation, Buchtel, North and Voris had been opened, but the outlook was bleak.

As 1932 began, Akron annexed the Tallmadge Schools that Gosling had refused a year earlier. This caused the addition of 1,200 students, but Gosling was not able to hire any new teachers due to the serious economic situation.

New Year's Day, 1932, brought both good news and bad news to Gosling. First, the good news was that the OEA had endorsed Gosling for the presidency of NEA and he was to receive their backing at the convention in Atlantic City in June. As for the bad news, over $1,500,000 had been cut from the Akron tax bills for 1932. This would require a second ten percent slash in the budget to make up for the lost revenue.

The delinquent tax bill in the city had risen to

about $5,500,000, which threatened the January 18th school opening. It was not until the Goodyear and Firestone companies voluntarily paid their taxes early, that Gosling was sure that the schools could open on schedule. He recommended that the schools then stay open as long as there was money to meet expenses. If there was no money available, he would close the schools because it was his feeling that they should not go into debt. He indicated to the board that they would need to cut approximately $1,065,000 from their previously approved budget to operate through the entire year. In order to make those savings, he would reduce services, personnel, and salaries.

Gosling received the backing of the press and, also, the Akron Teachers Association in a letter[45] to him. It indicated that they approved of reducing services, personnel, and salaries to meet the crisis and to help cut the enormous deficit. They did hope, however, that he would not curtail the length of the school year, even if it meant deferring salaries.

In preparing for the impending cuts, Gosling was anticipating a fifteen to forty percent delinquency in the tax collections (previous delinquencies were 4 1/2 percent in 1930 and 10 percent in 1931) so he prepared two budgets for the board's consideration. One budget was based on a fifteen percent cut and the other on a thirty-five percent

cut. The first budget amounted to a million dollars worth of necessary cuts, while the second amounted to almost two million. He personally thought that a $1,100,000 cut was in order for the remainder of the 1931 - 32 school year, rather than to wait until the begining of the 1932 - 33 school year. As eighty percent of the budget was in instructional costs or teacher salaries, he recommended a ten percent cut in that area though teachers had already taken a ten percent cut earlier. Other cuts approved by the board included:

1. Only employ a school dentist while the schools were in session.
2. Discontinue the Continuation School.
3. Discontinue the field workers and attendance officer positions.
4. Discontinue the Open Window classes.
5. Discontinue the film service.
6. Discontinue the kindergarten at the close of the year.
7. Put first grade back on part time next year.
8. Cut back the Hower Trade School.
9. Discontinue supervision of summer playgrounds.
10. Reduce heavily art, home economics, industrial arts, music, and physical education.
11. Give the superintendent authority to cut in other areas.
12. Reduce the superintendent's salary in proportion to teacher salary cuts.[46]

A total of ninety teachers were cut from the staff and the remaining teachers received a ten percent pay cut which saved approximately one million dollars. It was felt that these massive cuts were better than closing schools early, due to the bad public relations it might

cause. Even with the deficit absorbed, Gosling could not guarantee a full nine month year due to the increasing tax delinquency problem. It should be noted that the ten percent (now, really a total of twenty percent) pay cut was on a monthly basis, rather than on the yearly salary. In fact, contracts were monthly in nature.

In February, Gosling spoke over nationwide radio (CBS) to the Superintendents of the NEA from Washington, D.C.

> The worst effects of the depression is not the unemployment but the mental anguish and spiritual losses of the people. This attacks the ideal of American democracy. It results in the loss of public confidence and interest in the schools. We will next lose the teachers if pay decreases are permanent. . . . We will endure however and emerge from the depression with fresh concentration and renewed devotion to our great task.[47]

At this same meeting, the NEA supported a move to nationalize control of the public schools. Gosling, however, was adamantly against this move and worked to get the recommendation defeated. This may have been one of the reasons why today schools are still controlled locally, rather than at the national level.

Gosling had to drop the leases for the rooms rented at the private Goodyear Hall. By doing so, he realized a savings of $5,000. In hopes of saving more, he sent Waterhouse and Mr. Hatton, a high school principal, to Chicago to discuss with the North Central Association, ways of saving money at the high school level.[48]

These steps did not preclude the upcoming crisis.

Gosling could see that funds to meet the March 24th payroll would not be available. In addition, a large interest payment on the bond debt would be due. The board decided to borrow on the April taxes and repay the loan on the July 1, 1932, as the clerk had assured them that they would have the money then. The county auditor, however, refused to let Akron borrow on the April tax collections, as he was unsure how much would be delinquent. The amount involved was $132,000. Two days after Akron's first payless payday, the auditor advanced the $132,000, but Gosling recommended that the board use it to pay the bond debt rather than the teachers. The board did so, but managed enough, also, to pay the teachers. A community member by the name of Kasch, a realtor, sued the schools and the county auditor for using operating money to pay on the bond indebtedness. As a result of this law suit, the auditor refused to advance any more money to the schools unless his name was removed from the suit. In reaction to the stoppage of advancements of tax monies, the board began to study ways of refunding the bond debt and trying to borrow from the State Teachers Retirement System (STRS).

Kasch lost his suit and the board immediately borrowed from the auditor, hopefully, enough money to meet the remaining four paydays in the term. With

the loan from STRS (which hadn't come yet) and the advances, Gosling still had to close the schools early; and on May 27, 1932, school ended for the term.

During the summer months of 1932, Gosling cut sixty-four staff positions which he hoped would save about $30,000 in 1931 - 32. The remaining staff would continue to receive twenty percent less than their contracted pay on a monthly basis. All cuts mentioned earlier were to remain or take effect with the opening of school in September, 1932.

The proposed budget for 1933 was presented to the Board with a "cushion" included to ward off troubles which could result from tax delinquencies. In the public review of the budget, the Chamber of Commerce forced Gosling to cut the cushion before acceptance.

One bright light during the summer months of 1932 came in July, when Gosling was elected to the Executive Committee of the NEA. He missed the Presidency in June, however. For the previous three years, Gosling had been a member of the NEA International Relations Committee and had spent two years on the Business and Education Committee. Also, on the bright side and, not forgetting his public relations role, Gosling was able to report in a speech to the Akron Council of Home and School that the national median on educational tests was 130, but Akron scored at the 141.6 level, which was proof that the schools were

still working even in the light of the oppressing economic situation.

School opened on schedule on September 12, 1932, and ran at a reduced level until December, when the teachers again were notified of salary payment problems. The salary for January could be paid in full (at twenty percent reduction), but from January to March, only half pay would be available. The December, 1932, tax collections had been postponed to March, 1933, but the board borrowed $300,000 on it to meet salaries and bond indebtedness. The schools had suffered a great deal in 1932, but still had closed its books in the black.

The borrowing in January promoted a Beacon Journal editorial critical of the move because it would have to be paid back later. Gosling defended his move by noting that even in good years it was not out of the ordinary for schools to borrow on the December tax collections to meet expenses for the first month.

Rather than accept full pay in January, the teachers asked for only half pay so that the money could be stretched. At this point, the board had not taken a loan from the tax collections or received money from the STRS. On the twenty-seventh, the teachers received half pay. The other half would not be paid until after the March tax collections. The teachers received full pay for the first two weeks in February, but then half pay again until March.

In March, the county auditor offered to give the schools script for their share of the tax collections. The board agreed because the salaries could be paid in script, but the bond interest had to be paid in cash. Even so, the teachers were paid in full, in cash. To finish the school year, the schools would still need $1,005,000. They had $530,000 for operating and $355,000 for salaries. To help, the STRS finally loaned Akron $250,000.

The schools would be closed on May 5, that year, according to Gosling as he reviewed the financial situation. In a speech to the Rotary Club, he indicated that the early closing was due to increases in annexation enrollments, city enrollments, and the twelve new buildings (some from annexation).

By the first of May, the Board owed the teachers six weeks of back pay. Gosling recommended that they be paid as soon as possible. In addition, he recommended that no opening date be set for school next year and that no contracts for staff be let at that time. The board agreed and also elected Gosling to a new five-year contract at $8,000 per year on a sliding scale to be tied to the teacher's salaries, but not to go below $7,000 per year. Gosling accepted, but the board vote was 4-3. George Sherman, Milton Murphy, Clarence Foust, and Ritzman voted in favor of the new contract, but the three new members,

Mrs. Hower, Nellier Scott, and Ed Conner voted no. They assured Gosling that there was nothing personal in their vote, but that they felt it unwise to vote a five-year contract at that time. They were in favor of a one or two year contract. Several outside groups including the McKinley Political Club and the Veterans Association were against the long contract, also. The contract, nevertheless, was made official at the May 9 meeting of the board and these two groups promised to fight against the re-election of those members who voted in favor of the new contract.

The schools closed in early May with the board owing Akron teachers six weeks of back pay. The overflowing enrollment problems especially at East High School and South High School forced Gosling into seeking Federal monies to build additions onto these two facilities. During the summer, although there was no money available, supplies were ordered in hopes of beating price increases. In June, the county auditor advanced tax monies again, but none of it went to the teachers as bond interest was due. Gosling's goal for the summer was simply to get the schools open in September, 1933, with whatever monies the public had available.

The operating deficit for 1932 - 33 school year was $476,000. No deficit was anticipated in 1934 in view of expected state relief. If sufficient relief came, the

schools could open in the clear in September, 1933 and run all school year if a full tax was collected. Gosling relied on the state relief and favorable tax collections to the point of recommending a proposed 1934 budget that was $465,000 over the previous budget.

On July 17, 1933, Mrs. Otis Hower, at a board meeting inquired if the twenty percent cuts in salaries included administrative salaries. Gosling apparently took this as an affront and said, "Why do you ask? You know my salary was cut twenty-five percent to $7,500." Mrs. Scott indicated that she didn't like the reference to the salary of the superintendent, because the board had always stood behind him. Gosling answered that he could not confirm that statement.[49] The comments passed and Gosling recommended that the schools open on September 11, 1933.

Tax collections began to increase and by August, three million dollars had been taken in. The schools' share of this amount enabled them to pay all six weeks of back pay due the teachers. Now the board was able to start the new 1933-34 school year clear as far as teachers' salaries were concerned.

The money situation worsened as September progressed. Gosling noted that the taxpayers had not continued to pay their taxes and that he may have to close the schools on November 1 because there was no money to pay electric bills.[50] He pleaded with the taxpayers through a speech

before the Home and School League to pay their taxes and predicted that a deficit would have to be carried over into 1934 if the taxpayers didn't help.

On October 10, 1933, Akron teachers were paid in script for the first time. The Board had put off the decision to pay for a week, but finally decided to pay script rather than close. For the remainder of 1933, Akron teachers were paid partially in cash and the rest in script. Arrangements were made with the downtown merchants so that teachers could use the script as if it were money.

During the 1933 Christmas vacation, Gosling received word that the OEA was again planning to endorse him for NEA president. As the year closed, the Akron Public Schools remained in the same tenuous position as it had been in for the last three years. They were operating on a shoe string and everyone was suffering the hardships of the Great Depression which appeared to have no end in sight.

Resignation, 1934

The new year opened with the installation of the new board members elected the previous November. They included Mrs. Madalyn Bray, Mrs. Anne T. Case, and W. B. Kester. Reelected members included George Sherman, A. R. Ritzman, Clarence Foust, and Milton Murphy. They authorized the superintendent to extend the Open Window School when funds became available. The first January payroll would be met with $40 of script and the rest in cash. The second January payroll would only contain $20 in script. The board adopted the appropriations budget for 1934 wich amounted to $4,163,937. Two-thirds of the budget was again tied up in teacher salaries, bond retirement, and interest funds. The board decided that they would not pay the bonds and interest off unless funds became available.

Board President Sherman reminded the members of the board of Dr. Gosling's candidacy for president of the NEA and expressed his personal gratification that the Superintendent of the Akron Public Schools had become such a prominent national figure. He expressed his hope that the board would take some action fitting the honor that had already come to the superintendent and the city. Sherman then moved that the board offer a testimonial of appreciation and commendation to the Superintendent of Schools for the honor which the people in his profession had already bestowed upon him.[51]

But the Beacon Journal headlines on page one, February 7, 1934 read, "DR. GOSLING RESIGNS AKRON SCHOOL POST FOR NATIONAL POST." Gosling had stepped out of the race for NEA president and had accepted the post of National Director of the Junior Red Cross, on the condition that the board would release him from his contract which had four years to run. The board assured him that they would not stand in his way.

His new job would give a substantial increase in salary. Ralph Waterhouse would be named Acting Superintendent until a new superintendent was named. Waterhouse himself would be a candidate, as he had been the assistant under the three previous (Reed, McCord, Gosling) superintendents.

Gosling felt that the opportunities for education on a national scale were greater in the new position and that it was one of the most challenging positions in the educational field. Although not made public earlier, Gosling had been considered for the same job two years ago in 1932. He had been interested in the Red Cross for years; in fact, he had been Director of the Summit County Chapter. His other Akron Civic and social activities included:

Director of the Akron Art Institute
Member of the Executive Committee of the National Safety Council
Member of the Editorial Board of Nation's Schools
Member of Akron Rotary Club
Member of Torch Club
32nd degree Mason, Knight Templar
Member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Member of Phi Delta Kappa
Member of Phi Beta Kappa

The board was unanimous in expressing its regret for Dr. Gosling's departure.

Goslings resignation became official at the regular board meeting on February 12, 1934, with their acceptance of his letter:

> I have been offered an appointment as Director of Junior Service of the American Red Cross. Acceptance of this appointment will make it necessary for me to leave Akron and to take up my residence in Washington, D.C. I tender my resignation, therefore, as Superintendent of Schools and request that you make it effective on May first, 1934.
>
> I am now and always have been deeply interested in public education. In assuming my new position as director of the Junior Red Cross, I shall be able to remain in the field of education and to deal with schools and with children over national and international areas. The opportunities to assume leadership in a "Youth Movement for Service and Peace" offers a challenge to which I feel strongly impelled to respond. I hope that you will be willing to release me for this larger duty.
>
> Please be assured that I will leave my post in Akron with the kindliest of feelings toward the present Board of Education. You have been uniformly courteous and considerate. You have had a sympathetic understanding of the difficult problems connected with the administration of the schools.

> Of more importance to the citizens than these personal relationships with the superintendent are the fidelity, the integrity, and the intelligence with which you have dealt with all the perplexing situations which the financial stringency has thrust upon you. The people of Akron are indebted to you for the finest type of public service.
>
> You will not forget, I am sure, that the position of superintendent of schools in an American city is worthy of the best efforts of any man.

Dr. Gosling spoke at the NEA meeting in Cleveland on February 27, 1934. His subject was "Comprehensive Programs in Secondary Education." He predicted several changes including individualization and the dropping of language requirements as necessary for graduation.

A bill for State Aid to Parochial Schools came before the Ohio Legislature and Gosling, with the backing of the Ministerial Association, went to Columbus. He stated that it was not in the spirit of our government to aid religious schools. Our forefathers had decided on the separation of church and state after several centuries of trouble in European countries.

Also, in March, word was finally received on Gosling's application of 1933 for Federal Aid. The Civil Works Administration was going to renovate eleven Akron schools. No work had been done on any of Akron's sixty-three schools for three years. At least twenty-nine needed repair work, but funds were available for only eleven immediately.

On March 22, 1934, the Akron Teachers Association gave a banquet at the Mayflower Hotel in downtown Akron in Gosling's honor. There were over 500 teachers in attendance. Dr. Gosling's final message to the teachers was "Carry On and Cherrio."[52] He praised them for their courage and loyalty during the depression and told them that the new fuel tax was coming in and the schools expected $81,000 which would go to pay for their first back pay. The crowd broke out in applause and cheering. At the conclusion of the banquet, the teachers sang an original score called "Farewell, Dr. Gosling."

Dr. Gosling's final appearance before the board was at the regular meeting on March 29, 1934. Gosling left the following recommendations.

> I invite the Board to certain items which may be regarded as unfinished business. Many of these items which would have had my attention in due time if I had remained as superintendent of schools cannot have favorable action at this time. When the financial situation becomes easier and when the necessary funds become available, the following statements will be worthy of your consideration:
>
> 1. Complete the plan of annual in place of semi annual promotions.
> 2. Develop more fully a program of individual instruction as now practiced in several of our schools.
> 3. Develop a comprehensive program of health education in all schools as now practiced in several schools.
> 4. Supply more adequate instructional materials.
> 5. Add additional teachers in order that the size of classes may be reduced.
> 6. Organize a systematic and comprehensive program of adult education.

7. Permit and stimulate more extended use of the school plant for community activities and for the accommodation of both organized and unorganized groups of young people.

The financial stringency of the past has forced in all departments the adoption of economy, including economy in the use of school buildings. Permits should be granted more fully when funds become available.

8. Appoint a school psychologist.
9. Organize a department of Research.
10. Add more open window rooms for the extension of the work now underway with undernourished children.
11. Organize more sight saving classes.
12. Organize instruction for the correction of speech defects.
13. Organize a program of visual education.
14. Make suitable provision for instruction by radio.
15. Restablish kindergarten and the departments of physical education, home economics, and industrial arts under suitable supervision.
16. Place all first grades on full-time basis.
17. Restore the normal salary schedule as soon as possible.
18. Shorten the hours of labor of custodians and other employees in the Maintenance Dept.
19. Give contracts to definite substitute teachers.
20. Resume elementary school supervision with an emphasis on new methods of supervision.
21. Restore next year full-time supervision of art and music.
22. Reorganize and extend the instruction in art, music, dramatics, public speaking, and other creative activities.
23. Develop an all-year recreation program.
24. Reorganize high school curricula in harmony with modern views on education.
25. Develop through the whole system a comprehensive program of training in and for citizenship. The training should be based upon the theory that schools are not provided at public expense for the purpose of furnishing favorable opportunities in life for a few but that they are intended to train all youths so that they may be better prepared to make significant contributions to social, economic, and political welfare.

26. Save the heavy rent now paid for the accommodations of the Hower Trade School in the Hower Building by utilizing vacant space in school buildings.
27. Remodel certain old buildings with special emphasis on the improvement of lighting conditions.
28. Issue no more school bonds until the current school debt has been paid or greatly reduced. Any necessary additional school construction should be provided on the pay-as-you-go basis.
29. Develop the all-year-school plan on a voluntary basis. This plan will utilize the school plant more fully than it is utilized at present; it will provide useful activities and occupation for children in the summer months: it will postpone the necessity for additional school building construction for a considerable period of time; it will greatly reduce school costs.[53]

The board received the following letter from the Akron Teachers Association.

On the motion of Mr. Otis J. Barnhill, at the regular meeting on March 2, 1934, the Board of Directors of the Akron Teachers Association authorized the president to appoint a committee of three to prepare a resolution expressing the regrets of the Association at the necessity which takes Dr. Gosling from the Superintendency of the Akron Public Schools.

The committee appointed in conformity with the motion presents the following resolution:

Whereas, For the past 6 years, Dr. Thomas W. Gosling has administered the affairs of the Akron Public Schools in a most commendable manner, and

Whereas, During that time he has gained for himself the high esteem of his co-workers in the profession, and has manifested at all times a sympathetic understanding of the problems confronting the Akron Teachers Association, and under all circumstances has offered a constructive and forward looking leaderships, and

Whereas, He accepted the Executive Directorship of the National Junior Red Cross in Washington, D.C., thus necessitated his removal from our city;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Board of Directors of the Akron Teachers Association tend to him an expression of appreciation for the work done and of regret for the loss incurred by his leaving.[54]

The Board closed the meeting with the following resolution.

Whereas, Dr. Thomas W. Gosling has faithfully, diligently, and efficiently served the City of Akron, Ohio, as Superintendent of Schools for the past 6 years, and

Whereas he has made valuable contributions to the national field of education, and

Whereas, he has been called to direct the activities of a youth movement, international in scope, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that the Board of Education of the City of Akron, extended to Dr. Gosling its appreciation of services rendered and wish for him the greatest success and continment in his new position as National Director of Junior Red Cross activities and

Be it Resolved, that a signed copy of this expression be placed in the hands of Dr. Gosling as a token of our esteem.[55]

After the meeting, Gosling drove to Washington, D.C. with his wife and daugther, Jane (who was then a student at Ohio Wesleyan). His son and wife remained in Akron.

In May, the board elected Ralph Waterhouse as Superintendent of the Akron Public Schools by a 6 to 1 vote. Mrs. Case voted no, but pledged her support to Waterhouse and Akron continued to fight on during the Great Depression with the determination that had been characteristic during Dr. Gosling's tenure.

Footnotes

[1]Klippert, Sally C. Lengthened Shadows: The Story of The Akron Public Schools. Akron, Ohio: Akron Public Schools Publication No. 112, 1955, p. 100.

[2]The Viaduct, in 1976, is crumbling. Speeds on the bridge have been reduced to twenty-five miles per hour and roads beneath the span have been closed due to pieces of concrete falling from the structure.

[3]Grismer, Karl H. Akron and Summit County. Akron, Ohio: Summit County Historical Society, 1952, p. 414.

[4]Ibid., p. 415.

[5]Ibid., p. 449.

[6]Ibid., p. 450.

[7]Ibid., p. 451.

[8]Ibid., p. 453.

[9]Klippert, op. cit., p. 111.

[10]Maples, John Lee. "The Akron, Ohio Ku Klux Klan 1921 - 1928." Akron, Ohio: The University of Akron, 1974, unpublished thesis, p. 1.

[11]Klippert, op. cit., p. 104.

[12]Editorial, Akron Beacon Journal, April 5, 1928, p. 1. (This article refers to the editorial in question.)

[13]There is no mention of this in the Board Minutes, though reported in the Akron Beacon Journal, March 20, 1928.

[14]Akron Beacon Journal, May 8, 1928, p. 1. (Also in Maples, Ku Klux Klan, p. 92.)

[15]Maples, op. cit., p. 62-63, 90.

[16]Akron Beacon Journal, March 23, 1928, p. 29.

[17]Ibid., April 4, 1928, p. 1.

[18]Ibid., March 31, 1928, p. 17.

[19]Ibid., April 5, 1928, p. 4.

[20]Ibid., April 6, 1928, p. 25.

[21]Ibid., p. 25.

[23]Gosling's son Arthur later came to Akron and taught at Fairlawn Elementary school. This is on the authority of Dr. William Root who was Assistant Superintendent in Akron when Arthur was a teacher here. Arthur later moved to Chicago.

[24]Speech to the Akron Board of Education on July 2, 1928. Reported in the Akron Beacon Journal, July 3, 1928, p. 1.

[25]This is an example of social efficiency and characteristic of what Tyack has called the administrative progressives.

[26]Akron Board of Education, Board Minutes, Akron, Ohio: Akron Board of Education, July 2, 1928.

[27]Akron Beacon Journal, July 5, 1928, p. 4.

[28]Ibid., September 11, 1928, p. 25.

[29]Ibid., September 12, 1928, p. 21. (Again note the progressive theme.)

[30]Ibid., October 3, 1928, p. 12.

[31]Ibid., November 5, 1928, p. 1.

[32]Ibid., December 5, 1928, p. 5.

[33]Board Minutes, December 17, 1928.

[34]Akron Beacon Journal, January 18, 1929, p. 23.

[35]Ibid., February 26 and 27, 1929, p. 21 and 25, respectively.

[36]Gosling, Thomas W. Report to Mrs. Hower, July 8, 1929 (Hower Collection).

[37]Ibid., Letter, May 26, 1930 (Hower Collection.

[38]Akron Beacon Journal, July 23, 1930, p. 4.

[39]Ibid., October 13, 1930, p. 5.

[40]Ibid., Monthly entries, 1930 (See Gosling Index).

[41]Ibid., May 12, 1931, p. 1.

[42]Ibid., May 30, 1931, p. 11.

[43]Ibid., September 12, 1931, p. 11.

[44]Gosling, Report, December 21, 1931 (Hower Collection).

[45]Ibid., Report, January 11, 1932 (Hower Collection).

[46]Ibid., Report January 18, 1932. (November 4 on the list--Open Window classes--were the Akron Public Schools' response to the tuberculosis scare but in essence any child thought to have any health related problem or nutrition problem attended these classes. The community was apprehensive when these students were placed in regular classes and Gosling wisely ran a PR PROGRAM TO ALLEVIATE THE PROBLEM. Lincoln Elementary was the major Open Window school in Akron.)

[47]Akron Beacon Journal, February 24, 1932, p. 24.

[48]Both Waterhouse and Hatton become Superintendents in Akron.

[49]Akron Beacon Journal, July 18, 1933, p. 1.

[50]Ohio Edison Electric Company had, in 1932, given the Board a ten percent reduced rate to help with the financial burdens at the time.

[51]Board Minutes, January 15, 1934.

[52]Akron Beacon Journal, March 23, 1934, p. 25

[53]Board Minutes, March 29, 1934.

[54]Ibid.

[55]Ibid